Rockford Ills
June 21/56

Prof Asa Gray

My dear friend I am still housebound except on pleasant days and such are scarce at this season. But I have gained strength perceptably in three weeks past without however developing any plus energy to carry me beyond the very quiet, monotonous life of an invalid.

Thank you heartily for recent favors, for the biographical sketches — the notice of "Bebbia" — and for your kindly sympathetic letter. Either would lead me, were I in better trim, to overburden a friend very busy about more important matters with a prolix letter. As a young man I cherished an ardent admiration for Agassiz. His "Lake Superior" (which happened to fall into my hands at the time) was one of the books which

helped to make me a botanist of the small fry sort: but in later years I never could quite get over his speech delivered at San Francisco on the occasion of a public reception tendered by the Academy of Sciences of that city. I shall forget that now!

It was my good fortune to be in active correspondence with Judge Clinton during the entire period of his greatest activity in botanical pursuits. The number of droll letters I had from him:— once three in a single day! Even his plant labels were characteristic "Aster simplex it is Dr Gray says, and I grumblingly submit" Who else would have put that on a ticket in just that way! The very printed page seemed to change into his well remembered handwriting as I read his injunctions to you concerning the "Preliminary List"

Mr Greene assured me of your endorsement of "Bebbia" when he first wrote me about the new genus but it is none the less gratifying to have the reassurance come in such cordial terms.

My warmest regards to Mrs Gray How I would enjoy an evening with you both

Faithfully Yours

M L Robbins